United Nations A/67/272

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 August 2012

Original: English

Sixty-seventh session
Item 49 of the provisional agenda*
University for Peace

University for Peace

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The University for Peace, the world's leading educational institution in the field of peace studies, is continuing its expansion as it pursues the mandate accorded to it by the General Assembly in 1980. It is successfully implementing a strategy of expanding enrolment through flexible innovation, new online programmes and use of affiliated institutions throughout the world. It has maintained a balanced budget for the past five years, the negative impact of the world economic downturn on student enrolment and financial donations notwithstanding.

Key developments during the period 2010-2012 include the donation of a second campus in Costa Rica, the launch of a full online master's degree programme, the introduction of regular Spanish-language courses and the opening of a doctoral programme. A United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Chair was established with the University and its on-campus partner, Earth Charter International. In addition, Earth Charter International constructed a new building on the campus, adding to the facilities available. The University opened a new centre in The Hague and a joint programme with the University of California, Berkeley, while the first students enrolled at the Asia-Pacific Centre in Seoul. New master's programmes were opened in responsible management and sustainable economic development; sustainable urban governance and peace; and sustainable peace through sport (the last-mentioned in conjunction with the International University of Monaco). In Geneva, the University initiated a popular training programme on disarmament and launched a new gender programme in cooperation with Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar. The University's respected capacity-building programmes in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia have produced peace studies programmes in 26 universities in those regions. Two countries, Monaco and the Republic of Korea, signed the Charter of the University, and others are considering doing so.

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The above achievements notwithstanding, the University faces challenges in financing its programmes and in achieving recognition of its status. Given that very few Member States have provided support to date, the institution must cut corners and defer needed improvements to remain within its limited budget. The world economic downturn has gravely harmed the ability of students to pursue their studies and has also affected the University. Member States can support the University by signing its Charter, contributing directly, sponsoring University capacity-building programmes or providing scholarships for their own citizens who are students.

I. Introduction

1. The University for Peace was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/55 "with a clear determination to provide humanity with an international institution of higher education for peace and with the aim of promoting among all human beings the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence, to stimulate cooperation among peoples and to help lessen obstacles and threats to world peace and progress, in keeping with the noble aspirations proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations". It was invited to establish its main campus in Costa Rica, which has been its host country ever since.

2. Significant efforts have been made in the past 10 years to revitalize and extend the activities of the University. The present report, which is submitted to facilitate consideration by the General Assembly of the item entitled "University for Peace", pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/83, contains a summary of the progress made by the University during the period 2010-2012 and highlights the challenges that it faces as a result of its rapid growth and lack of reliable funding.

3. The present report includes an overview of the main activities at the University's campus in Costa Rica and its affiliated institutions. It deals with the University's relations with other United Nations bodies and the host country, its financial situation and its development strategy. It describes the substantial progress made towards building high-quality education and training programmes, developing relationships with other institutions to reach as many interested students as possible, public relations and the University's determination to be self-sustaining on the basis of its earned income. It also describes the specific needs of the institution, principally the expansion and modernization of campus facilities, the regularization of international staff under the United Nations salary and retirement system, the establishment of regular funding and an endowment to stabilize the institution.

4. The University for Peace continues its efforts to strengthen cooperation with other institutions in the United Nations system, including through specific arrangements for internships by qualified University for Peace graduates, the use of United Nations officials as lecturers, training programmes, periods of residence at the University for interested officials and the possibility of using the University campus as a venue for United Nations events.

5. The General Assembly, in its resolution 64/83, noted with appreciation the vigorous actions taken by the Secretary-General to revitalize the University. The Assembly encouraged Member States, intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations and interested individuals to provide financial support to the University, invited Member States to accede to the International Agreement for the Establishment of the University for Peace and requested the Secretary-General to consider ways to further strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the University. Such support has become even more important as the University pursues partner agreements with other institutions in carrying out its mandate and establishes affiliated institutions in other countries. Thus, Member States, especially those that have never done so, are urged to recognize and provide support to the University and to support the establishment of subsidiary regional offices of the University and affiliated institutions when the University undertakes such initiatives.

II. University for Peace in 2012

A. Rodrigo Carazo campus, Costa Rica

6. At its main campus in Costa Rica, recently named in honour of the late former President of Costa Rica and founder of the University, Rodrigo Carazo Odio, the University has pursued its objectives of academic excellence and innovation in all subject areas relating to peace. Set out below are highlights of recent developments.

1. Master's programmes

7. The University continues to offer innovative master's programmes in areas related to peace studies, security and the environment. Currently, 11 master's programmes are offered at the main campus, including two new programmes developed on the basis of a worldwide interest in the subjects.

8. The first new programme, in response management and sustainable economic development, was designed to meet the need for ethical content in business and economics-related subjects, especially following the banking crises that began in 2009. The programme has proved extremely popular and clearly responds to a need felt by many students and their future employers. Thematically, the programme is linked to the Global Compact.

9. The second new programme, in sustainable urban governance and peace, was initiated in 2011 and is designed to tackle the broad issues associated with modern cities. The University's view is that the need for peace in urban areas falls well within its mandate and that, with more than 50 per cent of humanity now living in cities, it needed to include urban studies in its course offerings. This area of specialization is closely related to the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

10. The University's most important innovation over the past year has been the launch of its online master's programme in sustainable peace in the contemporary world, which can be taken in the form of individual courses or as a full master's degree. It is a fully interactive online programme, which uses resident and visiting University academic staff as professors. It has immediately proved popular and the University foresees a steady expansion in enrolment and in the range of courses offered. The programme plays a significant role in the University's mission of outreach to students and professionals who cannot pursue a face-to-face master's degree.

11. The University continues to offer master's degrees in international law and human rights; international law and the settlement of disputes; environmental security and governance; sustainable natural resource management; international peace studies; media, peace and conflict studies; gender and peacebuilding; and peace education.

2. Special programmes

12. The University maintains dual-degree, dual-campus and joint programmes with partner universities around the world. These are interesting options because they permit students to obtain more than one degree by studying in more than one institution.

13. The programmes focus on innovative topics. A recent example is the programme on sustainable peace through sport, which is hosted by the International University of Monaco and implemented jointly with the University for Peace. The programme has been supported by Peace and Sport, a global initiative under the patronage of Prince Albert II of Monaco. Although students are based at the campus of the International University of Monaco, about half of their courses are delivered online by the University for Peace.

14. The University will continue, wherever possible, to develop similar programmes to expand its reach around the world.

3. Study-abroad programmes

15. **Undergraduate credit-building**. As a result of its partnership with the University of California, Berkeley, the University for Peace is now admitting senior undergraduates, on a case-by-case basis, to study at the University for up to one semester. Qualifying students can take the University's master's courses and the University will award credits towards a master's degree, which the student can later pursue at the University or elsewhere. This approach, which benefits both the student and the institution, encourages undergraduates to pursue their studies at the postgraduate level.

16. **Semester-abroad programme**. In recent years, higher education has changed significantly: students have become more mobile and universities are looking into programmes that enable students to take courses abroad. Courses related to peacebuilding are increasingly in demand. Accordingly, the University now offers study-abroad options for up to one semester for qualified senior undergraduates. The model has proved successful for all interested parties and is an important way for the University to fulfil its United Nations mandate, given that the programmes of many partner universities can be enriched through the inclusion of peace studies. The University is seeking new partnerships in order to expand this programme.

17. **Summer peace institute**. This new seminar programme takes place each June. Students from various institutions come to the campus to study major world issues under the general theme of "problems without passports". The theme is taken from a remark by the former Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, that many world problems crossed borders and affected people in all countries. The programme has been listed as a study-abroad programme officially recognized by the University of California, Berkeley.

4. Spanish-language courses

18. The University has begun offering online courses in Spanish in an effort to engage with the Latin American community and to attract to the University the many students from the region seeking an education in peace studies in Spanish. Students can already submit their master's theses in Spanish.

5. Doctoral programme

19. The University has announced a two-track doctoral programme in peace and conflict studies. One track is designed for talented researchers who will pursue innovation in the field of peace studies and the other is aimed at capturing the

important experience of peace practitioners in academic publications. The input of peace practitioners is essential to a good understanding of this field.

6. Capacity-building programmes

20. The University has carried out highly successful capacity-building programmes, funded by the Government of the Netherlands, which are regarded as a model for development policy. The first was carried out in the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and South and South-East Asia, and the second covered the Great Lakes region in Africa. The programmes have attracted considerable interest as a model for assistance to developing countries. Under these programmes, the University develops partnerships with universities in the region concerned (26 such partnerships have been developed to date). The partner universities wish to launch their own master's programmes in peace studies and the University facilitates this by training academic staff and supporting a network of partners. Professors at partner universities develop their own curricula that are relevant to their local realities. The second of these programmes will be concluded successfully in 2012 and the University is seeking support from Member States to continue this important work in other regions. As a result of these capacity-building programmes, peace studies are now available locally in many conflict-affected areas, including the Congo, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and the Sudan.

7. Executive training

21. The University is successfully offering specialized executive training programmes on responsible business in a multicultural world. It has also initiated training for women professionals in partnership with the University of Connecticut, supported by the Government of the United States of America.

8. Improved facilities at the Costa Rica campus

22. In 2011, the University received a substantial additional property as a donation from a former colleague, providing it with an alternative campus, housing facilities for visiting professors, a large covered auditorium space and additional classroom areas.

23. In March 2012, a new, modern building was completed on the University campus by Earth Charter International, providing additional space and facilities. The highest-level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification for the building's sustainable architecture is now being sought.

9. Accreditation

24. The University joined the Costa Rican national higher education accreditation system in 2008 and is working to have all its programmes and courses accredited as soon as possible. The University expects to complete accreditation of its master's programmes by the end of 2013.

10. Enrolment

25. The University has seen overall growth in enrolment since its revitalization in 2001. As is the case with many educational institutions, however, full-time on-campus enrolment at the University's main campus has suffered from the effects of

the poor economic situation worldwide. The number of applications has continued to rise, but many students cannot afford to pursue studies without scholarship support or access to student loans. Such scholarship support and student loans from Governments, foundations and the private sector have become essential to guarantee access to these programmes regardless of the financial status of the student. Currently, many applicants do not pursue their applications when they learn that the University cannot offer substantial scholarship assistance. A chart showing growth in enrolment can be found in the annex to the present report.

11. University alumni

26. Graduates of the University for Peace are currently pursuing further studies at the University of Oxford, Harvard University, the London School of Economics and Political Science, the Australian National University, the University of California, Berkeley, and other distinguished academic institutions. University alumni are employed by the Governments of Canada, Japan, Lebanon, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Uganda and the United States, among others. Other alumni are working or pursuing internships at Amnesty International, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the European Free Trade Association, the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the International Criminal Court and national delegations to the United Nations. They are also serving with many other organizations, pursuing further studies or working in the private sector. The University seeks to maintain contact with its alumni and for the first time has held an alumni reunion, in addition to having student volunteers contact alumni by telephone. Regional reunions have been held in Africa, Asia and North America.

B. Subsidiary centres and affiliated institutions

1. Africa

27. The University's Africa programme continues to be one of its strongest programme elements. Based in Addis Ababa, and with an entirely African faculty and staff, this programme co-sponsors a joint master's degree with Addis Ababa University, coordinates a programme of doctoral research and study by students around the African continent and publishes the well-respected *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal*, a peer-reviewed biannual journal containing articles by Africans about African issues. In October 2012, the University will open a new joint gender programme in partnership with Femmes Africa Solidarité and Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar.

2. Asia and the Pacific

28. The University's Asia and the Pacific programmes include three main components: the Asia Leaders Programme, the Asia-Pacific Centre in Seoul and a dual-degree partnership with Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in the Republic of Korea. The Asia Leaders Programme, supported by the Nippon Foundation, selects promising students from Asia for a tailored programme of study at Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines and at the University for Peace. In 2011, this remarkably successful programme attracted 800 applications for 30 places. The

Asia-Pacific Centre in Seoul, which began to receive students in 2011, is affiliated with the University and is expected to grow and to host various peace-related activities. The dual-degree partnership with Hankuk University of Foreign Studies permits students at that institution to spend the second year of a two-year master's programme at the University for Peace, receiving master's degrees from both institutions.

3. Latin America

29. From its early days, the University has had two affiliated institutions in Latin America: the World Centre for Research and Training in Conflict Resolution in Bogota and the World Centre for Research for Peace in Montevideo. While these two institutions continue to operate independently, their directors regularly attend the University's annual International Academic Council meetings to report on their activities and to coordinate with the University. The World Centre for Research and Training in Conflict Resolution has been working on the theme of the reinsertion of former combatants into society, a key process for the security of communities in Colombia. It has also published research, helped victims of the Colombian conflict and worked to promote coexistence in Colombian society. The World Centre for Research for Peace focuses on activities to promote education for peace, laying emphasis on conflict prevention and resolution.

4. Europe

30. In Europe, the following institutions are affiliated with the University: the European Centre for Peace and Development in Belgrade, the University for Peace office in Geneva and the University for Peace Centre in The Hague. There are also partnership programmes with the University of Innsbruck and the International University of Monaco. The European Centre for Peace and Development has a range of teaching and conferencing programmes and is active throughout the western Balkans. The University for Peace office in Geneva is the University's principal interface with United Nations institutions and hosts the University's disarmament training programme in implementation of the recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General on disarmament education (A/57/124) and approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/60. The University Centre in The Hague is the newest institution affiliated with the University. It has established its offices in the prestigious Peace Palace and will focus on teaching programmes on peace issues in local universities. The two university partnership programmes have their own joint arrangements with the University. The University of Innsbruck offers a second year of study for University of Peace graduates, while the International University of Monaco hosts a joint programme on peace and sport (see para. 13 of the present report).

5. North America

31. The University's longest and most successful partnership has been its dual-degree programme with American University in Washington, D.C., which focuses on environmental issues in relation to peace and offers students the option of obtaining master's degrees from both American University and the University for Peace in a two-year programme. New partnerships have been forged with the University of California, Berkeley (see para. 17 of the present report) and the University of Connecticut, where a joint programme to train women professionals is

being conducted with funding from the United States Agency for International Development.

32. The University office in New York serves a key liaison function with United Nations Headquarters and United Nations programmes based in New York. The University was granted observer status in the General Assembly in 2008. The Executive Director of the office serves as the University's Permanent Observer to the United Nations and supports its fundraising efforts through organizations such as the United Nations Delegations Women's Club and its "Women for Peace" project. The office also provides support in organizing events at the United Nations, such as that held in February 2012 to create awareness of the University and to mobilize support for it.

6. Australia

33. The University has been in contact with educational institutions in Australia and has given a briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Canberra. It continues to seek partner institutions in the region.

C. Relations with United Nations bodies

34. The University is continuously seeking partnerships, visiting speakers and collaborative activities with relevant United Nations bodies. One of the most important areas on which it continues to focus is the career development of alumni within the United Nations system. The University is a member of the United Nations group of institutions in Costa Rica.

35. **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Chair**. In October 2011, a new United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair on education for sustainable development was established with the University and Earth Charter International, which is located on the University campus. The signing ceremony was held on 2 February 2012. This is a three-year agreement with UNESCO and Earth Charter International for research and training in education for sustainable development. The Chair will be managed by Earth Charter International.

36. **General Assembly**. In its resolution 65/11, the Assembly commended the University, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women for their activities in further promoting a culture of peace and non-violence, including the promotion of peace education and activities related to specific areas identified in the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (Assembly resolution 53/243 B). The Assembly encouraged all three organizations to continue and further strengthen and expand their efforts.

37. **Human Rights Council**. The University holds permanent observer status on the Human Rights Council and participates regularly in its activities.

38. **United Nations University**. The University would welcome increased cooperation with the United Nations University in view of the encouragement in that regard set out in the Charter of the University for Peace.

39. **Non-United Nations status of University employees**. Its best efforts notwithstanding, the University has been unable to improve the status of its faculty

and staff, who have yet to be recognized as holding the status of regular United Nations employees. This means that their salaries and benefits are lower than those of regular United Nations employees and that international employees have no benefits or retirement system. Since the University is small and has a limited budget, the challenge of creating a retirement system has proved simply too costly.

D. Community relations

40. The University has excellent relations with the local community in Costa Rica, beginning with the towns in which it is physically present. It is also reaching out to other important communities and the country in general to offer its knowledge and training opportunities. The President of Costa Rica, Laura Chinchilla, was the recipient of an honorary doctoral degree from the University when giving the keynote speech at the University commencement ceremony in 2010. The former President, Oscar Arias, spoke at the University to celebrate its thirtieth anniversary.

41. **Consortium of institutions in Costa Rica**. Inspired by an article written by the Rector of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre, the Rector of the University organized a meeting of the rectors of the Central American Institute of Business Administration, the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre and the University for Peace, as the three distinguished graduate schools in Costa Rica that attract substantial numbers of international students. The objective was to develop cooperation among the institutions, in particular with regard to Government regulations affecting them and the important contributions of those institutions to the Costa Rican economy and culture. This cooperation has now expanded into a consortium that also includes the Escuela de Agricultura de la Región Tropical Húmeda and the National Biodiversity Institute. It has met on several occasions to discuss coordination of objectives.

42. **University access road**. The single access road to the campus continues to pose a problem. The area that was severely damaged in a landslide in November 2010 has not yet been repaired, the promises to do so notwithstanding. The University has made great efforts to coordinate with the local community and other interested parties and has taken the lead in seeking repairs to the damaged area of this road, given that access to the campus is essential to the operation of the University. In June 2012, the University was informed by the National Emergencies Commission that the funds required to repair the road had been approved and that the necessary repairs would begin in 2013.

E. Financial situation

1. Financial results

43. The University currently has an annual budget of some $7 million, encompassing its main campus and worldwide activities. It finished the financial year 2010/11 without a deficit and showed stable budgetary results during the reporting period. While the University's objective is to be self-sustaining on the basis of income generated by its teaching and training programmes, it remains dependent on donations, which allow students to benefit from the University regardless of their ability to pay tuition fees.

44. To date, the University has been unable to offer its international employees the same benefits as regular United Nations employees and it requires the support of Member States if it is to do so. Similarly, the University may now have to cancel its participation in the United Nations security system because it cannot afford the annual fee of $7,000. In addition, the University has specific priority requirements for construction to meet the needs of an expanding educational institution, in addition to an overall need for an endowment fund to stabilize its financial situation. The Member States that created the University share the responsibility for ensuring that it is safe and that its employees are treated fairly.

45. Notwithstanding the appeal by the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly in 2009 (A/64/281) and Assembly resolution 64/83, in which the Assembly invited Member States to contribute to the University, very few countries have provided support. The countries that have generously provided financial support to the University during the reporting period are Belgium, Canada (through the International Development Research Centre), Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Monaco, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States.

46. The University is deeply grateful for the continuing annual financial support of the Dutch Postcode Lottery, the Nippon Foundation and United Nations Women for Peace.

2. Donors meeting

47. The permanent representatives of Member States to the United Nations in New York have been approached directly for their support and were invited to participate in a meeting of donors, held in New York in February 2012 and co-hosted by the permanent representatives of Costa Rica and the Netherlands to the United Nations. The Rector of the University gave a presentation on the University's current state. At that meeting, the Permanent Representative of Finland pledged a donation of $50,000 on behalf of his country. If other Member States would follow suit and contribute according to their possibilities, the University would be able to continue to support students from all parts of the world.

F. Evaluations

48. All University programmes undergo regular internal and external evaluations. In addition, the University underwent overall evaluations during the reporting period, which are described below.

49. **Nippon Foundation**. The Nippon Foundation assessed the results of the Asia Leaders Programme, and the University in general, in October 2011. The results were positive and a decision was made to renew the programme.

50. **International Academic Council**. On 24 and 25 November 2011, the University International Academic Council held its sixth meeting. The Council reviewed and evaluated the University's newest programmes, including those in responsible management and sustainable economic development and sustainable urban governance and peace, in addition to the online master's programme. It also discussed the status of the University's work for accreditation through the Costa Rican national accreditation body.

51. **Evaluation by the Chancellor**. The Chancellor of the University, Ruth Dreifuss, evaluated the University in October 2011. Her report, submitted to the University Council in February 2012, was generally positive, and contained specific areas for improvement.

52. **Capacity-building programmes**. The South Asia, Africa and the Middle East (2007-2010) and Great Lakes region (2009-2012) capacity-building programmes were evaluated by a team of independent experts from George Mason University. The final report for the former and the midterm report for the latter (the programme will end in August 2012) show that important results have been achieved. Given that providing capacity-building support in conflict-affected areas involves many obstacles, the implementation of lessons learned from these evaluations has been essential to the success of the programmes.

G. University development strategy

53. The University's strategic objectives have remained constant since 2007 and continue to be: to offer education for peace to interested persons worldwide, in pursuit of its unique United Nations mandate; to be the world's leading institution in the field of education for peace; and to be self-sustaining on the basis of earned income, including tuitions and fees, donations for scholarships and facilities, and project funding.

54. The University believes that education for peace benefits all countries, contributes positively to world stability and progress, and should be supported by all States Members of the United Nations. Education for peace makes young people aware that there are alternatives to conflict and should be a component of any national or international development strategy or programme. The University has been actively contributing to this essential component and has shown that it is capable of doing much more. To do so, however, it needs the strong recognition and support of the States Members of the United Nations.

55. A specific problem that the University continues to face is the recognition of its special status. This can arise in relations with other United Nations institutions or with national Governments in countries in which the University seeks to establish its activities or to work in partnership with local institutions. The problem can be remedied if Governments and organizations recognize and respect the unique status that has been accorded to the University by the General Assembly. The University seeks full respect for its international status and the support of host Governments to carry out its important mission. Member States are requested to support the University as it pursues its activities, including by:

(a) Signing the Charter of the University. This entails no financial obligations and is a significant gesture in support of peace. The Charter is open for signature through the Office of Legal Affairs in New York;

(b) Making direct financial contributions of any size to the University;

(c) Providing scholarship support for students from the donor country, which offers clear benefits for the country itself and is in line with the desire of students today to study abroad;

(d) Making named donations, which can be earmarked for a specific need, such as buildings or facilities;

(e) Sponsoring capacity-building programmes, under which the University can develop peace studies programmes in developing countries.

III. Conclusions

56. The University is carrying out a mission that is increasingly central to the future of the world. Education for peace must be expanded until it touches all people, everywhere, to convince them that armed conflict must be relegated to the past.

57. For the University to accomplish the mission that it has been given by the General Assembly, Member States must take the lead in supporting that mission by recognizing the institution, making generous financial contributions that will make it possible for the University to offer its programmes of study to all students who wish to participate in them, and facilitating the University's operations in host countries.

Annex

Enrolment chart